

assigned to his father a foremost place among the few from whose wisdom he had himself drawn profit, and to the end of his days he retained the most unquestioning admiration for his works and was never weary of paying affectionate homage to his genius and attainments. If we bear in memory the lineaments of the father as drawn by the son, we shall catch in the son himself many a suggestion of heredity even where the contrast between the two seems sharpest and where resemblance is least to be expected. Take, for instance, the following :

He was a complete literary character, a man who really passed his life in his library. Even marriage produced no change: he rose to enter the chamber where he lived alone with his books, and at night his lamp was ever lit within the same walls. Nothing, indeed, was more remarkable than the isolation of this prolonged existence. . . . He disliked business, and he never required relaxation; he was absorbed in his pursuits. In London his only amusement was to ramble among booksellers; if he entered a club, it was only to go into the library. In the country, he scarcely ever left his room but to saunter in abstraction upon a terrace; muse over a chapter, or coin a sentence. He had not a single passion or prejudice: all his convictions were the result of his own studies, and were often opposed to the impressions which he had early imbibed. He not only never entered into the politics of the day, but he could never understand them. He never was connected with any particular body or set of men; comrades of school or college, or confederates in that public life which, in England, is, perhaps, the only foundation of real friendship.

D'Israeli the elder lived through one of the most stirring periods in the history of the world, yet in all his correspondence there is hardly an allusion to passing events. Not the sort of man, one would say, whose son was likely to become Prime Minister of England; but we shall find as we proceed in the son himself something of the same tendency to aloofness and isolation, and many of the habits of the student recluse not eradicated though held in subordination by what was strenuous and enterprising in his character and genius.